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DIRECTORATE OF  
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## CONTENTS

25X1

Burma - Communist China: Rangoon appears ready to push harder for better relations with Peking.  
(Page 6)

25X1

25X1

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Next 5 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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Burma - Communist China: Rangoon appears ready to push harder for better relations with Communist China.

General Ne Win recently told [ ] [ ] he believed that moderating influences in Peking could make possible an improvement in relations, soured by anti-Chinese riots in Rangoon in mid-1967. He felt that new attitudes in the Chinese leadership had removed China as a threat to Southeast Asia, and implied that a Chinese desire for a belt of friendly neighboring countries held out promise for Burmese fence-mending initiatives.

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[ ] In a continuation of efforts begun by Ne Win last November, Rangoon recently nominated an ambassador for Peking's approval. Rangoon had upgraded its diplomatic representation in Peking from first secretary to counselor level last winter; Peking did not reciprocate. Although the Chinese have recently toned down their anti - Ne Win propaganda, it is not clear that Peking is ready for a resumption of the ambassadorial ties that were suspended three years ago.

Rangoon probably hopes that friendlier relations with Peking would result in a cessation or diminution of Chinese support to Burmese Communist insurgents. Even if relations improve, however, Peking is unlikely to end such support. [ ]

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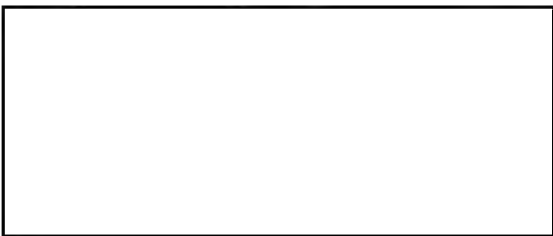
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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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